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L'UMILE PIANTA.

OFFICIALS OF THE ASSOCIATION.

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MISS L. GRAY, 3, St. David's Avenue, Bexhill, Sussex.

Hon. Assistant Secretary—

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MISS WIX, at Fredville, near Dover.

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CHANGES OF ADDRESS.

1914. Adam, P., 48, London Road, Carlisle (sole).
 1901. Albrechtsen, Mrs. (née Hirtzel), P.O., Makuon, B.E.A.
 1898. Allen, E. C., The Vicarage, Boston, Lincs. (post).
 1912. Feiling, D. I., c/o Mrs. Hermon, Brook Hill House, Cowfold, Sussex.
 1894. Gilbert, I., 67, Harcourt Street, Newark-upon-Trent (sole).
 1908. Reid, Mrs. (née Hart), Government School, Nairobi, B.E.A.
 1909. Reid, F. L., c/o Mrs. Gordon Duff, Park House, Cornhill, Banff (post).
 1900. Saunders, E. M., The Fort, Gwalior, C. India.
 1911. Smith, J. R., 7, Bon Lea Terrace, Thornaby-on-Tees (home).
 1909. Trembeth, A. M., at Harnham Hollows, Salisbury (post; accidentally omitted from the last number).

NOTICES.

Miss Wix much regrets that she is too busy any longer to undertake the work of Editor, and she has therefore sent in her resignation to the S.E. Committee. The S.E.C. will meet shortly and elect a new Editor for the next two years, or until the next election of S.E.C. members.

Miss Gray has in a fresh supply of students' badges. Their price has been raised to 4s. 6d. They are beautifully done; one of the best sets we have had.

When students do not receive their copies of the PLANT, will they *first* inquire at their post or home, as the case may be, and if still unsuccessful, will they write to Miss Young, 102, Cranbrook Road, Ilford, Essex? Miss Young sends

out the PIANTA, and has any spare copies there may be. It is no good to write to Miss Gray or Miss Wix.

The next number of L'UMILE PIANTA will be the Address Number. This number justifies its existence by its utility, but it is a great labour to the Editor, and her helpers, and a great expense to the Association. Each student who remembers to send up a p.c. to the Editor, with her name (most important, and often omitted!), her year, her home address, her post address (with name of postess), is saving the Editor a great deal of trouble. About two hundred and thirty students will read this notice; last year *nine* did as they were asked. The remaining two hundred and twenty-one had to be written to, and that does not include the other students who, not being members, do not see the notice. So will *all* students kindly send up post cards, as described, to the Editor, Fredville, near Dover, by *December 1st* (or earlier), with their addresses. The post address must be *guaranteed correct for January, 1918*.

The next number of L'UMILE PIANTA will appear on January 15th, and all communications must reach the Editor by December 15th.

LETTERS.

Lasswade,

May, 1917.

DEAR EDITOR,

I wonder if anyone has come in contact with the National Herb Growing Association. I think it may interest some to hear a little of what is being done in this district. Two farmers in the village were asked to give a small piece of ground each, one behind the Protestant School, and the other behind the Catholic. This they very kindly did, and

in addition the ground was ploughed so that the children were able to begin work about the middle of April.

We saw very practical plans of how to lay out small pieces of ground in a little book of gardening, and proceeded to work out somewhat similar diagrams for our portions, each of which measures one-eighth of an acre.

These plans were given to the head teachers, the children were supplied with tools, and the work of laying out, sowing and planting has been very efficiently carried out. Each piece is laid out in about twenty-one neat plots, each measuring, I think, twelve feet by sixteen feet, with paths running in both directions, so that those working on one plot have no excuse for poaching on other people's preserves. These particular gardens have been sown partly with marigold and opium poppy, and partly planted with chamomile, though of course there are many others which are required. Needless to say, one has to consider the soil of the neighbourhood.

The petals of the marigold are used by homœopaths, and it almost makes one tremble to think of the thousands of petals which will be required to make up one single pound! Of the opium poppy, the unripe capsule is required for preparations used for the relief of pain, especially neuralgia. The whole chamomile flower is asked for. It is used as a tonic, and also contains quite valuable oil.

The children in both schools are very keen on the work. Even the tinies ask to be allowed to work in the garden, so we look for good results. There are special times in the week when the various classes go out to work, under the supervision of the teachers.

The following extract may prove of interest to some:—
"The object of the Association is to establish, and to perpetuate as a home industry, the trade in those medicinal

herbs and drug plants which have been imported in recent years from Central Europe. . . . A large number of these medicinal herbs can be successfully cultivated in Great Britain. Many of them are indigenous, and some were cultivated in the Southern and Eastern Counties during the earlier part of the 19th century. The country, therefore, can be made to produce enough material for home consumption, instead of relying upon the large imports coming mainly from Central Europe."—Yours, etc.,

M. N. GILLIES.

The Murrel,

Aberdour,

Fife.

June 15th, 1917.

DEAR EDITOR,

During the winter I had a Bible class of men (navvies from the Rosyth base), and boys and girls over fifteen. One man was entirely self-taught. I imagine he is past middle age, but his love for the New Testament made him teach himself Greek, and he reads all he has time and opportunity for. I gave him a copy of *Ourselves* volume, and the following is part of a letter I had from him about it.—Yours, etc.,

HARRIET SMEETON.

OURSelves.

"When first I opened the book I thought for a moment that I must be sitting in the Tinker's chair, looking through the quaint leaded window at the Moot Hall and the square tower of Elstree Church. Nor did the vision of Bunyan fade as I went forward through the book. To me another of its virtues is in its harmony and proportion. Virtue is

shown to be noble only when governed. This truth, so often forgotten, is duly emphasized: that virtue in excess is vice. This is an excellent thing in these days when so many are given to hold a truth without regard to its due proportion. An age prone to extol Charity and forget Justice, needs reminding that not in extremes but in the due balance and proportion of each virtue are their beauties seen—their power felt.

There is a subtle harmony throughout the work. No harsh denunciation of failure or shortcomings, but such reproof as points to higher things, liberal in thought and tone, within wide yet very definite limits.

I do not know if there is one part I admire more than another, but if there were it would be that portion dealing with Justice—Spoken Truth, Veracity, etc. I am afraid our beautiful, vigorous and fanciful language is in great danger just now, for which I think a cheap press very largely to blame. To me there is a definite meaning and value to each word, and I quite agree with the author that all words should express the exact fact.

If there is any fault—no, that is not what I mean, but I will put it this way—if there is any point which I might be disposed to criticize, it would be this: that in the Cabinet of Mansoul the Prime Minister seems to suffer from an uncommon complaint, at any rate in political circles, considering his high office, he is far too modest.

SWORDS AND PLOUGHSHARES.

I have read *Swords and Ploughshares* with much pleasure, especially the 'Carver in Stone.' It is so very true. I have, like the carver, found joy and pleasure in my work, only to be met with the cry, 'We do not pay you for good work and true—we want quantity,' and I felt I could not

give that which did not satisfy my desire. Do you wonder that so many of our artisans have rebelled at the gross commercialism of this age? The master craftsmen of the past worked not only for the due reward of wage, but for the true expression of themselves through their work. I feel so strongly on this subject that I had better say no more."

St. Maur,

Ventnor, I.W.

May 30th, 1917.

DEAR EDITOR,

In the May number of the *PLANT*, mention was made of the interest and attraction of *A Book of Centuries*.

This reminded me of a talk which I had a few months ago with a governess (not a student, but keenly interested all the same).

She told me that the children she was teaching always kept geography note books.

They made them themselves every term, just for that term's work. Into them they pasted pictures, cuttings, and scraps in general about the countries they were studying, and there were blank pages for maps. I have not had an opportunity of trying it myself, but it struck me as being rather a useful idea, which I venture to pass on.—Yours sincerely,

THEODORA S. MALDEN.

House of Education,

Ambleside.

DEAR EDITOR,

Miss Mason wonders if you would not like to continue from your last number these further accounts of Students'

Campaigns. She has received permission to publish the letters, and desires me to say how proud she is of the work of old students.—Yours sincerely,

E. KITCHING.

June 25th, 1917.

DEAR —

At last I have been able to start the ball here with regard to the campaign in the Elementary Schools. Our little village school would be an ideal place to work on our lines in, and the schoolmistress is enthusiastically keen to do so, and is anxious to begin with her new term. Mrs. R., the Secretary and Treasurer, is quite keen, and Miss J., the mistress, is going to talk it over with the vicar, who is the chief power, and I have promised to see him, too, if I can possibly manage it, and we are quite hopeful that it will be permitted, and I feel sure that Miss J., who seems to be an intelligent and enthusiastic teacher, will make a great success of it.

But now, what is the next step? If we get the necessary funds and permission, does she send in an application for admission?

Next point: I have just been to stay at my old post near L— for the week-end, and saw no reason why I should not "campaign" there, and Mr. S. took up the idea with keen approval and, as you know, he is a power in the educational world of L—. I couldn't see the vicar, so I want to write to him, but have no more of the pamphlets to send him, so I am wondering whether you have any to spare, or should I write to Miss Parish for them?

From the small village there, Mr. S. sees no reason why I should not go on to the schools in L—, and proposes that I shall see the Director of Education there, and talk to him

about it; and then I hope, too, to get hold of a most splendid schoolmaster there, whose school I was specially interested in in the old days, and who, I feel sure, would help. This further development will have to wait till the end of the term, when I get back from S.—Yours, etc.,

D. BROWNELL.

July 29th, 1917.

DEAR —

I have some glorious news for you! I had a most delightful and very successful time in L— yesterday, and I hope that we shall end by getting all the schools in the town and district to join. I spent nearly an hour at the Education Office, with Mr. M., the Secretary for Education (who seems to be the moving power in L—), and Mr. H., the most prominent of the L— schoolmasters, who is very much at the top of the tree there, and given more or less a free hand by the authorities, who appreciate the splendid work he has done. I felt that he would probably oppose anything that he might consider liable to curtail his liberty, or interfere in any way with his own schemes, but I also felt—and Mr. S. fully agreed with me—that if only I could secure his interest, and get him to take up the scheme, that the other schools would follow suit. So I decided to make a bold cast, and tackle him, too! It all turned out just as I thought. It was not difficult to get his interest and sympathy, but he felt that his own schemes have been so successful, and he enjoys his "free hand" so much, that he did not want to introduce any change of methods, etc.

I pointed out to him that really he has been working on our lines of a "Liberal Education" for all these years, so that it would mean very little "change," and that "union

is strength," and finally he came round enthusiastically, and he is going to *begin*—with Mr. M.'s keen approval—by putting his lower standards (for which he tells me he has an excellent teacher who would carry out our methods successfully) into the P.U.S., so from that beginning they both expressed the hope that we should get the whole of L— to come in, and get it firmly established there. They are both going to Drighlington, to see the scheme working there, and Mr. H. said, which pleased me immensely, as showing that he is genuinely keen about it now, "I must put you upon the track of Mr. B., at K—, and get him to join!" Won't it be lovely if we can get it established in K—, too? In the afternoon I saw Mr. C., the Vicar of G—. Unfortunately the schools there are closed, and the master and mistress away, so I could not see them. I found this interview much heavier work. Mr. C. is a good man, but he hasn't the courage of his convictions. He is absolutely in sympathy with us, and thinks that it would be an excellent thing for G—, but he hasn't the enthusiasm to carry him through the many difficulties he sees in the way. Mr. S. warned me that I should have difficulty there, and said that I must not be disappointed if I made no headway, and he thinks that if we can secure L—, G— will come in later on.

Now I must end this long report. Please forgive the length, but it has been such a joy to tell you about it.—Yours, etc.,

D. BROWNELL.

August 12th, 1917.

DEAR —

A very hurried note just to ask you to let me have some "ammunition" after all! I do want another P.R. for

April. I have two sets, March, April, May, on loan at the minute, and have March and May of a third set, which I want to lend, but no April number. I don't suppose that you can supply me with this, however, while you are away? Then I most of all want the leaflets, forms E., G., and G.2. Our Vicar has come home, and has promised to see me and discuss the matter to-morrow, and as he has control of the B— "Higher Grade Schools" here, I am hoping that he might give me an introduction to the teachers, and back me up in the attempt to do something here. I haven't been able to put in any artillery preparation in the way of literature in his case, so I feel that to-morrow, as he is a very busy man, and can only spare me a short time, will only be in the nature of an opening, but I hope that it will lead on to opportunities for work.—Yours,

D. BROWNELL.

August 17th, 1917.

DEAR —

Thank you for the *Nineteenth Century*, which arrived this morning, and which I am looking forward to reading hugely, and for the "ammunition," which is most welcome. I had a very pleasing interview with our Vicar on Monday, and he was most interested and ready to help, and told me, to my delight (for it seemed like an open door), that the Secretary for Education here is a member of his congregation, and he has promised to introduce him to me, and to give him the three pamphlets to read! Then he took off the pamphlets to give to the head schoolmistress (I had only one set, and we decided, after consideration, that she was a more hopeful subject than the head master), and is going to arrange for me to see them, but he has been away again, so

the work is held up for the minute. However, I hope to go ahead next week, and put off my visit to my sister if necessary.—Yours,

D. BROWNELL.

August 23rd, 1917.

DEAR —

Mr. J., the Secretary for Education in B—, was away for an indefinite period, so my interview with him has had to be postponed till the Christmas holidays, but I saw the head master (Mr. M.), of the C— Higher Grade Schools, and the head mistress of the C— Higher Grade Infants' School, and both took up the idea most warmly, and Mr. M. hopes to join for his lower standards (to begin with), and Miss E. for the infants, after Christmas; their work for this term all being arranged and signed, they cannot begin before. The head mistress of the Upper Girls' School is so well satisfied with her own work that she is not inclined to do anything, and did not even wish to see me and talk it over, so I have left her, and hope that I may be able to get hold of her and do something there next holidays. I found Mr. M. and Miss E. most interesting and interested, and enjoyed my interview with them very much.

My ambition at the minute is soaring to such giddy heights that I am almost afraid to tell you of it; but it is no less than to get the papers to Mr. Fisher himself through a great friend of his at the S— University, whom my brother-in-law knows!

If we could interest him in the work, wouldn't it be too glorious for words? Of course, he may know all about it already—it seems to me that his speech opens a door to us—but we may be able to get definite help from him.—Yours,

D. BROWNELL.

August 19th, 1917.

MY DEAR —

Miss Kitching says you would like to hear about the P.N.E.U. method applied to Sunday Schools.

You remember, I expect, that it was Mr. P. who asked me to address as many members of the Sunday School teachers of his deanery as he could collect. He is Secretary of the deanery, and the Diocesan Instructress was from S. Christopher's, and had lately retired owing to health. Her methods had not given satisfaction. Do you know the S. Christopher methods? The training is, I think, two months. Much stress is laid on "expression work," and no teacher should have more than nine pupils. (Why *nine* I cannot imagine!)

So I made the attempt. There were twenty-seven at the meeting—a good number really, as the parishes are very scattered, and hardly any have railway stations. One dear old couple walked from a village three miles away, and several came even longer distances. We had tea in an orchard, and the address there, too. After the lecture we divided into three discussion groups, led by Mrs. Pyper, Mrs. P., and myself. My group was so enthusiastic that no discussion was really necessary. Mrs. P. had a Mr. E. (clergyman), a very able, sound, thoughtful man, once a schoolmaster. He is not the sort to be readily enthused, but he said to her: "Well, Mrs. P., as for me, I agree with every word Miss Wix said, and I know from experience that even the slowest, most hopeless, stupidest boys will almost become clever if they learn anything from the *original*." She had one highly trained S.S. teacher (lady), who raised the objection that the tiny children of, say, four to six, would not understand Bible words. Mrs. P. thought that might be so, but told how she had "talked" the stories to

her two elder girls, but now read them to the younger ones, and with very much greater success.

Mrs. Pyper's group had two difficult members, one an elementary schoolmaster, who knew Miss Ambler, of Drighlington, nine years ago, and considered that he knew far more about P.N.E.U. than I did, and what is more, that it is in use in every elementary school in England! I fancy that sort must be hard to cure, but he announced finally that he meant to try the method. The other thorny member was a vicar. The children's lesson for the next Sunday was: "was crucified, dead and buried." For months they had been taking the creed—two of his teachers told me that the children hated it. It did seem so terrible that these children's love for God and the Bible should be so crushed and perverted and killed, that perhaps I spoke rather warmly. But our chief spokeswoman was the objector of Mrs. P.'s group!

The meeting finally dispersed at 8.5! because I simply *had* to go. Just before the end Mr. P. read out a letter from the Diocesan Secretary, Canon G., saying that a course of lectures on S.S. teaching would be held in the early autumn by the newly appointed diocesan lady, if convenient to a sufficiently large number of teachers to attend. Almost unanimously they declared their desire for a course of lectures—but on *this* method, the P.N.E.U.—wouldn't it be possible to have one or two? In Canterbury, perhaps?

Of course, I have had to allow them wide liberty in books, etc., but have lent round all our spare copies of Paterson Smyth.

I know, of course, that such enthusiasm cannot last, that there are certainly many difficulties ahead; but still, it may all do something towards allowing the children to love their Bibles. Small M. P., told me once she thought the Bible the most interesting book she'd got, and "often read it for fun!"—Yours, etc.,

H. E. WIX.

India,

June 14th, 1917.

MY DEAR —

And now about our event of yesterday—a P.N.E.U. At Home! Miss Loveday is at Kotagiri, a small hill station not far from Ooty, so when Miss Low and I met, and agreed on the great scope for P.N.E.Uism. out here, we determined to give an At Home to all the people we know with children out here. Miss Loveday agreed to reading the principal paper, should we have a meeting, so the next thing was to approach Lady Pentland. She, too, was quite encouraging about our idea, and promised to come. I enclose a copy of our invitation, which was sent out to about sixty people. Most of them accepted; and as the day grew near, we got very frightened. However, people were quite interested and encouraging, and it all went very nicely, and we feel it was a success. Most of them were very keen indeed, and if only we could start a branch, I know it would grow like anything.

This is exactly what we did. We were so anxious to give people papers to take away—and I had only about twenty pamphlets—that we got reprinted the three things which I enclose. I do hope there was nothing wrong in having papers reprinted. The people were all very glad to take them, and knowing how easy it is to forget what one has heard, we thought it was invaluable to give it to them in a form which they could digest at leisure. Our second attraction was an exhibition of the books used in Classes I and II, and all Peggy's and John's exam. papers, drawings, paintings, exercise books, etc. These were much examined and appreciated. We had our Home Education books and *P.R.s* on a table, for lending to people who wanted them.

Unfortunately the afternoon was rather wet, but we had about forty people in all. First we gave them tea (which Lady Pentland most kindly provided), and then at half-past four we made them sit down, for they were very busy looking at books, etc. Then I stood boldly up, to make my introductory remarks, and to introduce Miss Loveday. She read beautifully what, I think, was an excellent paper. Then I got up again to introduce Miss Low. She was splendid, speaking from notes, and explaining the working of the P.U.S. She spoke so easily and well, and said just what was wanted. After that people asked questions, and discussed amongst themselves, and wanted to go on looking at books and papers. Many of them were very enthusiastic, and wished an Ambleside student would begin a school. One lady is desperately wanting a governess for her two girls. I wrote to Miss Rhode to ask if she wanted a post, but she is teaching three little boys at Kodaikanal, and naturally prefers to live with her sister. She says, too, that she thinks of having a class in Madras in October.

Miss Loveday is sending to Miss Parish an "official account," as well as all our papers. We thought that was the correct thing to do.

After the At Home, we were much exercised in mind as to how to take advantage of the interest we had raised, and so establish some permanent centre!

I wish any of us were permanent enough in one place to start a branch, but we can't do that at present. Next best thing, we thought we would send a notice to the paper, giving all our names and addresses, as sources of information. I shall enclose the notice, which my sister wrote, as soon as it appears in the *Madras Mail*.

The really thrilling thing is, that the head master of the "Breek's Memorial School" here, came to our meeting,

and we find he was most appreciative. Mr. Theobald is his name, and he has long wished to start a separate class, under his supervision, for children of the better—or rather, the richer—classes, who do not like to send their children to such a mixed school.

It seems to me, and to all of us, that the place and the time are just ready for a P.U. school. If only some Ambleside could come flying out from home! But in the meantime, if only some student who is in India now could start, perhaps someone could come out permanently, when travelling is possible. I don't know if it would be a good idea to start under Mr. Theobald's wing or not. He has a cottage, with a big room for a schoolroom, all ready from September, as he was thinking of enlarging his school. He says if we can put him in touch with a P.U.S. trained teacher, he will take the responsibility, and have this P.U.S. class separate from Breek's School, and independently run and managed, but under his wing.

Miss Low and I, who went to tea with him yesterday, both agree that we would rather start quite independently of him, although the idea of being connected with a school feels nice and safe. We think that a P.U.S. class would succeed so well, that the student whose it was, would soon prefer to be independent. I have promised to ask the students who are in India, if any of them would like to start this class, under Mr. Theobald's wing. I think I will advise them at the same time, that in my opinion an independent class would be sure to succeed, and possibly grow into something quite big in time. Mr. Hankin, the head of the Nizam's police in Hyderabad, an able, well-known, and much respected man (whose wife desperately wants a governess, as I have already mentioned), came rushing up to see me as soon as his wife had got our At Home invitation.

He said, "We were hoping it meant you were going to start a school. Let me assure you, Mrs. Tasker, if you were to get a good school started in Ooty for children such as ours, you would be benefiting the whole of India. Here are ours waiting. If you produce a teacher, we shall send you our two girls to-morrow!"

Miss Loveday may be writing to you herself, but in case not, I send you her letter to show you what we think of doing now, and how our meeting is having its effects.

If Miss Parish could come to Ooty and S. India for a few months! However, one never knows into what minds the "living idea" of the P.N.E.U. may penetrate, even if there may not be much outward result of our effort for the children's sake.—Yours,

J. H. TASKER.

June 14th, 1917.

MY DEAR JESSIE (Mrs. Tasker),

Mr. Gillatt is tremendously interested in our meeting, and says we absolutely must send our addresses to be published in the *Madras Mail*! He has concocted a nice little letter for me to write to the Editor, a rough copy of which I enclose. What do you think? He thinks that the Editor is sure to take it up, and would make up an introduction to our papers from what I have said in my letter to him.

I think it really would be a help to people who couldn't come to hear about it, and a short account would not convey so much as the full papers; and we really might have some interesting correspondence about it. Mrs. Abbott, for instance, would, I am quite sure, be quite ready to uphold the P.U.S. as a mother teaching her own children out here.

It was quite like old times, our little gathering, and all

the books and children's work spread out like the Conference at home! I am so glad we did it, and hope the results may be far-reaching.

Mr. Gillatt travelled down to Madras with Mr. Hankin, and talked "Education" the whole night.—Yours,

K. LOVEDAY.

P.S.—We may yet see an "Educational Supplement" to the *Madras Mail*!

A TOUR IN NORTHERN INDIA.

It may be of some use or interest to readers of the *PIANTA* to hear something about the places that Miss Low and I visited during a month's tour in Northern India last January. From Madras we first made a bee-line to Darjeeling, to feast our eyes on the glorious scenery of the Eastern Himalayas. Two nights and a day in the train brought us to Calcutta, and a third to the foot of the hills from where the ascent of 8,000 feet is made in the "Toy Railway." This is considered to be a wonderful feat of engineering skill. The line makes loops and zig-zags in a marvellous way. Here and there, as you go up, you get a glimpse of snow-covered peaks. At Darjeeling itself you get a full and glorious view of snow-covered ranges. Kinchinjunga (28,000 feet) is about forty-five miles distant, though it looks much nearer. It is beautiful against a clear blue sky; more so in the glow of sunset, and best of all at sunrise. The thing to do at Darjeeling is to start off at about 3 a.m., by bright moonlight, and ride—or if you prefer it you can be carried in a dandy—up to Tiger Hill, six miles distant, from where you can watch the sun rising on Kinchinjunga, and from where you may also see the top of Mount Everest (29,600 feet) 120 miles away. The colouring